



WHAT IS A COE AND DOES THE VA CERTIFYING OFFICIAL AT MY SCHOOL REALLY NEED IT?

What is a COE

A Certificate of Eligibility (COE) is a counseling document that serves to notify a student when the VA approves their application for educational benefits. Students need to read over this document as it identifies which benefit was approved, how these benefits will be paid, how many months of benefits are available to use, and any follow-on steps needed by the student.

Why does the VA Certifying Official at my school need my COE?

Short answer, the VA Certifying Official does not need your COE. In many circumstances, the VA Certifying Official is concerned with certifying someone who may not be eligible.

In truth, if the VA Certifying Official certifies someone who isn't eligible (COE in hand or not), the VA will actually use data from the Department of Defense (DoD) in making their determination of whether or not the student is eligible for the benefits they have applied to use.

How does the VA know that I'm eligible without a COE?

Depending on the GI Bill® program itself, eligibility is either managed by the DoD through the Service Member's DoD Component or by the VA itself. In either case, the VA uses electronic information from the DoD to verify eligibility, information from the school to verify the student is attending an approved course or training, and the student's application to initiate the request.

In situations where the VA needs additional information from a Service Member's/Veteran's record to process the application for benefits, the Regional Processing Office will reach out to the DoD directly.

In the event a student is certified for benefits they aren't actually eligible for, the VA will still issue a denial letter to the student.

Trademark

GI Bill® is a registered trademark of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). More information about education benefits offered by VA is available at the official U.S. government website at <http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill>.

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